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SUBJECT: Ambassador visits Rosario - praises roles of BNC, U.S. firms, and NGOs

¶1. SUMMARY: Ambassador Wayne visited the city of Rosario to attend the 65th anniversary of the binational center ARICANA and the opening of the 28th Annual Meeting of Argentine-American Binational Centers in Rosario in late October. He also visited the John Deere tractor factory and met with a youth leadership NGO. END SUMMARY

¶2. Ambassador Wayne visited the Argentina's Agricultural capital, Rosario, October 22-23 to attend the 65th anniversary of the binational center ARICANA and the opening of the 28th Annual Meeting of Argentine-American Binational Centers in Rosario. The meeting gathered representatives of 16 Argentine-American binational centers from across the country to share experiences and challenges in the daily work they carry out to enhance mutual understanding between countries through English language teaching and cultural exchange. The Ambassador praised the work of ARICANA and the other binational centers in English teaching, student advising, library services, and culture. He told the BNC leaders that the Embassy is working to enhance its relationships with the BNCs through program support and visits. He attended a gala concert with the Mayor of Rosario and hundreds of BNC leaders, graduates, and supporters. The DCM gave a keynote address later in the meeting and attended the closing gala dinner, which included participation by the Governor of Santa Fe Province, Hermes Binner.

¶3. The Ambassador spoke informally with the Mayor of Rosario, Roberto Miguel Lifschitz, during the BNC's anniversary musical show. Lifschitz highlighted the work of his administration and community leaders to build commercial and educational ties with the State of California.

¶4. The Ambassador also had the opportunity to visit the campus of U.S. firm John Deere in Rosario. The plant manufactures engines for tractors and combines produced at a sister plant in Brazil and serves as the finishing and distribution center for Deere products in Argentina. Deere dominates the Argentine market for agricultural tractors and combines. Executives charted the very successful recovery of Deere's sales since the 2001 crisis, and its very high popular standing in the country but anticipated hard times ahead due to the decline in commodity prices and the limited availability of credit globally. The Ambassador met with the plant's union leaders, who appeared to have a generally positive relationship with management. In remarks released to the press, Ambassador cited this relationship as one of the reasons Deere tops polls as the most admired firm in the agricultural sector in Argentina.

¶5. Later during his visit, Ambassador Wayne met with 20-30 young leaders of Fundacisn Nueva Generacisn, a local NGO devoted to community service projects. The foundation selects young leaders (ages 18-25) and trains and works with them to develop community service projects. Embassy plans to deepen cooperation with this active and impressive NGO.

¶6. PRESS: Ambassador's visit received heavy coverage in local media. Both major television stations broadcast interviews with the Ambassador and DCM enabling them to make points about the then U.S. upcoming elections and the G-20 meeting and U.S.-Argentine relations.

¶7. THANKS AND REGARDS.

WAYNE